

# Environmental Management System



## **City of Winchester**

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## **Environmental Policy**

It is the policy of the City Council of the City of Winchester to create an environmentally safe community in which to live and work. The City is committed to implementing and continuously improving citywide environmental practices and to becoming a model of environmental performance.

To demonstrate its commitment to this policy, the City will develop an Environmental Management System that includes:

An audit of all municipal operations that may impact the environment;

Adherence to all applicable environmental laws and regulations, as well as to our voluntary environmental commitments;

Management of pollution sites and problems, including work with property owners, the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (VDEQ) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to evaluate and rehabilitate Brownfield sites in the City;

Preparation of a comprehensive stormwater management plan to ensure compliance with federal and state National Pollutant Discharge Elimination Systems (NPDES) requirements;

Initiation of a proactive pollution prevention program through source reduction and where possible, elimination;

Training for all City personnel on the safe handling, use and disposal of waste and materials in an environmentally sensitive manner; and

Regular reassessment of municipal operations sites and procedures to reduce or eliminate adverse environmental impacts.

The City will communicate this policy to its employees, the public and stakeholders. We will encourage their suggestions for environmental improvements. Further, the City will encourage increased community involvement by providing information regarding the proper means to dispose of household waste and by initiating neighborhood clean-up programs.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **What is an “Environmental Management System (EMS)”?**

An EMS is a cohesive, comprehensive set of written environmental policies and procedures that identify an organization’s environmental goals and objectives and defines how an organization will achieve and maintain those goals.

### **Why is it important to have an EMS Program?**

An EMS program improves management effectiveness, prevents pollution, and improves environmental performance. The EMS program provides order, consistency, and organization. It allocates resources, assigns responsibilities, and provides a mechanism for the organization to continually evaluate its processes, procedures, and practices.

### **Are there legal requirements for an EMS Program?**

Both federal and state governments have established laws and regulations holding organizations responsible for protection of air, land, and water resources from pollution. EMS programs are used to establish and effectively implement pollution prevention programs to reduce the impact of pollutants on natural resources.

### **How will the City of Winchester benefit from establishing an EMS Program?**

The EMS Program will help the City reduce its environmental impact, reduce costs, and increase efficiency and community satisfaction. The City of Winchester will also enhance its reputation and public stature as an environmental leader.

### **What does pollution prevention mean?**

Pollution prevention means eliminating or reducing at the source, the use, generation or release of environmental waste. Pollution prevention methods include equipment or technology modifications, process or procedure modifications; substitution of raw materials; improvements in housekeeping, maintenance, training, or inventory control; and recycling.

### **What is the difference between an “aspect” and “impact”?**

- Aspects refer to anything that can react with the environment. Examples include fuel, all types of batteries, cleaning supplies, scrap, utilities, etc.
- Impacts are the harm done to the environment. For example improperly disposing of motor oil can pollute groundwater or affect the ecology of the Shenandoah River.

### **Why is the City of Winchester implementing an EMS Program?**

- Manage regulatory responsibilities with confidence.
- Manage important issues such as growth, brownfields, and greenfields development.
- Improve relations with state and federal regulators, local industry, and surrounding governments.
- Provide a positive public image for environmental management leadership and innovation.

### **What role do employees have in developing and maintaining the EMS Program?**

- Identify “aspects” associated with the activities, products, and services provided by the City.
- Determine which “aspects” are significant and prioritize.
- Integrate environmental protection procedures and safeguards into daily activities.

### **Are there recognition programs to identify organizations that develop EMS Programs?**

The Virginia Environmental Excellence Program was developed by the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) to promote the use of environmental management systems and pollution prevention as a means of improving environmental quality and improved organizational performance. This voluntary program offers recognition and incentives to encourage the adoption of environmental management systems and pollution prevention by businesses, manufactures, government agencies and other organizations.

There are two types of participation in the program **Environmental Enterprise** or “**E2**” and **Exemplary Environmental Enterprise** or “**E3**” designations. The “E2” designation recognizes those organizations that are interested in beginning or are in the early stages of implementing an environmental management system emphasizing pollution prevention. The “E3” designation recognizes those organizations with fully implemented EMS’s pollution prevention programs and demonstrated performance.

To be considered for inclusion as an Exemplary Environmental Enterprise, an organization must apply and provide the following:

- Policy statement.
- Identification of the facility’s actual or potential impacts to the environment.
- Pollution prevention program.
- Identify the environmental legal requirements.
- Description of roles, responsibilities and authorities.
- Procedures for reporting and record keeping.
- Established procedures to provide training.
- Documented emergency response procedures.
- Monitoring for noncompliance with the facility’s environmental management system and providing necessary corrective actions.
- Voluntary self-assessments.
- Procedures to communicate goals and policies to external and internal audiences.

**What goals have been established for EMS Program implementation?**

- Earn the “E3” designation City Facilities and Operations.
- Promote environmental stewardship in all City activities
- Develop EMS procedures covering all municipal government activities.